

Message Text

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CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

SUMMARY: RETIRED ACM THAWI CHUNLASAP, LEADER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SJP), ANNOUNCED THAT DEMOCRATS, SOCIAL NATIONALISTS AND SJP HAVE AGREED TO FORM COALITION GOVERNMENT. SENI PRAMOT WILL BE PRIME MINISTER; THAWI, DEPUTY PM. PRESS REPORTS POSSIBILITY THAT RETIRED GEN KRIT SIWARA WILL BE MINISTER OF DEFENSE. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT REVERSES STAND AND WILL NOT RESIGN AS LEADER OF SOCIAL ACTION PARTY. SENI PRAMOT WILL BE INTERIM HOUSE SPEAKER WHEN PARLIAMENT CONVENES.
END SUMMARY

1. RETIRED ACM THAWI CHUNLASAP, LEADER OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SJP), ANNOUNCED ON APRIL 7 THAT THE DEMOCRATS (DEM), SOCIAL NATIONALISTS (SNP), AND SJP HAD AGREED TO FORM A COALITION GOVERNMENT. HE SAID THAT THE DOOR WAS OPEN FOR OTHER PARTIES TO JOIN THE COALITION AND MENTIONED ONGOING MEETINGS BETWEEN THE DEMOCRATS
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AND THE THAI NATION PARTY (TNP). THE DECISION WAS

STATED TO HAVE BEEN MADE AT A MEETING OF THE LEADERS OF THE THREE PARTIES AND PHICHAI RATTAKUN AND THAMMANUN THIANGGOEN, DEMOCRAT DEPUTY PARTY LEADERS, AND SAWET PIAMPHONGSAN, SENIOR ADVISOR TO THE DEMOCRATS.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SENI PRAMOT WOULD BE THE PRIME MINISTER AND THAWI WOULD BE A DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER. WHO WOULD HOLD THE OTHER MINISTERIAL PORTFOLIOS WAS REPORTEDLY NOT DECIDED UPON, ALTHOUGH THAWI HINTED BROADLY THAT THE DEM AND SJP AGREED TO OFFER THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE PORTFOLIO TO FORMER ARMY COMMANDER IN CHIEF, GENERAL KRIT SIWARA.

2. PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT REVERSED HIS STAND (REFTEL AND ANNOUNCED ON APRIL 7 THAT HE WOULD NOT RESIGN AS LEADER OF THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (SAP). HE CHANGED HIS MIND, HE SAID, AT THE URGING OF SAP MEMBERS. SAP MEMBERS HAVE TOLD EMBOFF THAT THEY FEARED SERIOUS SPLITS IN THE PARTY IF KHUKRIT LEAVES THE PARTY BECAUSE NEITHER OF THE LEADING CONTENDERS TO REPLACE KHUKRIT HAVE THE STATURE OR POLITICAL ACUMEN TO HOLD THE PARTY TOGETHER. BUNCHU ROTCHANASATHIAN IS TOO ABRASIVE AND DOGMATIC WHILE BUNTHENG THONGSAWAT IS CONSIDERED TOO WEAK TO MANAGE SAP. KHUKRIT KEPT OPEN THE OPTION OF RUNNING IN A BY-ELECTION BUT RULED OUT THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ELECTED PARTY MEMBER RESIGNING TO PAVE WAY FOR A BY-ELECTION. KHUKRIT JOKED THAT IF A 72 (SIC) YEAR OLD MP DIES (HE SEEMED TO BE REFERRING TO HIS BROTHER SENI), HE WOULD RUN IN THE BY-ELECTION AND HTIS TIME HE MIGHT WIN.

3. DOMOCRAT PARTY LEADER SENI PRAMOT WILL MOST LIKELY BE THE ACTING HOUSE SPEAKER WHEN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONVENES (TENTATIVE DATE APRIL 15). UNDER HOUSE RULES THE MOST SENIOR MP (I.E. THE OLDEST) ASSUMES THE POST TO PRESIDE OVER THE FIRST BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE, THE ELECTION OF THE PERMANENT HOUSE SPEAKER AND DEPUTY' HOUSE SPEAKER.

4. COMMENT: COALITION CABINET TO WHICH THAWI REFERRED
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WOULD HAVE SUPPORT OF 150 MEMBERS OF 269 MEMBER HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. THIS WOULD BE ADEQUATE MAJORITY, ASSUMING PARTY DISCIPLINE HOLDS FIRMS. IT APPEARS THAT INCLUSION OF THAI NATION PARTY (56 SEATS) IS NOT RPT NOT EXCLUDED, BUT IT WOULD CAUSE PROBLEMS. INCLUSION OF TNP WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT, IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE, TO HAVE GNE. KRIT SIWARA AS MINISTER OF DEFENSE, A POST THAT TNP LEADER PRAMAN HAS HELD IN KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT. KRIT AND

PRAMAN HAVE HAD STRAINED RELATIONS OVER THE PAST SIX
MONTHS OR SO, AND IT WOULD BE HARD TO INCLUDE THEM BOTH
IN THE CABINET. INCLUSION OF KRIT IN A FUTURE SENI
GOVERNMENT WOULD TEND TO INSURE THE NEW GOVERNMENT
AGAINST THE POSSIBILITY OF A MILITARY LAUNCHED COUP
D'ETAT.
WHITEHOUSE

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